

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 INR-07 SS-15 SAM-01 SP-02

NSC-05 CIAE-00 /059 W

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R 041253Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4251

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

S E C R E T JIDDA 2434

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, ET, SO, FT

SUBJECT: SAUDI INTEREST IN DEVELOPMENTS IN HORN OF AFRICA

REF STATE 36080

1. DURING CALL BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SOBER ON APRIL 3, FONMIN SAUD EXPRESSED CONTINUING CONCERN IN DEVELOPMENTS IN ETHIOPIA. HE REITERATED SAG'S SYMPATHY FOR ERITREAN CAUSE AND SIMULTANEOUSLY ITS HOPES THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION WOULD NOT LEAD TO INCREASING INSTABILITY AND OPENING THE AREA TO UNFRIENDLY ELEMENTS.

2. SAUD ALSO VOICED UNEASINESS OVER SITUATION IN SOMALIA. HE HAD NOTED THAT SIAD'S SPEECH TO THE 25TH CPSU CONGRESS WAS EVEN MORE MARXIST IN TONE THAN CASTRO'S. SAG HAD NO DOUBT ABOUT THE REALITY OF THE SOVIET BASE AT BERBERA. SAG HAD TRIED TO ENCOURAGE CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMALIA, A BROTHER MEMBER OF THE ARAB LEAGUE, BUT HAD GOTTEN LITTLE RESPONSE. SAUD

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WAS FEARFUL THAT SOMALIA WOULD CONTINUE TO BE RESPONSIVE

TO SOVIET PRESSURE AND THIS COULD CAUSE MORE TROUBLE IN THE REGION.

3. AT THAT POINT SOBER NOTED OUR OWN CONCERN OVER FORTHCOMING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TFAI. SOBER CITED OUR VIEW ON THE DESIRABILITY OF A CONTINUING FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE AFTER INDEPENDENCE. SUCH A PRESENCE WOULD, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE TFAI BUT SHOULD ALSO BE ACQUIESCED IN BY THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. SAUD WONDERED WHETHER THE SOMALIS WOULD ACQUIESCE. SOBER SAID HE DID NOT KNOW THE RESULT OF THE RECENT FRENCH MISSION TO MOGADISCIO, AND EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT SAG MIGHT BE ABLE TO PLAY A USEFUL ROLE IN ENCOURAGING SOMALIA TO LOOK UPON A CONTINUING FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE AS OFFERING THE GREATEST HOPE OF MAINTAINING A PEACEFUL SITUATION IN THE REGION. HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT ALSO BE USEFUL FOR SAG TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH THE FRENCH.

4. RETURNING TO ETHIOPIA, SAUD SAID HE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING AN UPDATED U.S. ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION AND OUTLOOK THERE. SOBER SAID HE WOULD ASK THAT SUCH AN ANALYSIS BE PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY THE EMBASSY. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT PLEASE PREPARE AND FORWARD TO EMBASSY JIDDA.
PORTER

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION COORDINATED WITH MR. OTTO,S/S-O

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NNN

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